

III. Identifying Growers

Grower recruitment, securing venues for the on-premise activities and Consumer Surveys occupied much of the first six months of this project.

These four Pennsylvania producers were selected:

- **Bell & Evans Chicken** – a marketer of premium chicken
- **Cross Creek Farms** (raising the Pennsylvania Simply Sweet Onion™) – the Pennsylvania Simply Sweet is a new product raised by Cross Creek Farms designed to compete with Vidalia and other “super sweet” onions introduced east of the Allegheny Mountains for the first time in 2002
- **Country Time Farm Pork** – an antibiotic-free pork raised by Country Time Farms that is Federally approved to label as such
- **Lancaster Organic Cheese** – Initially produced by Jacob Zook but now produced by Green Hills Farm owned and operated by John Esh. Both individuals are Old Order Amish families who own and operate an organic dairy farm. (Unfortunately a drought affected the grazing area for Esh’s cows which caused him to restrict production and put the retail expansion of his products on hold.)

Through the first half of the year student marketing teams worked with these producers to help develop a profile of each growers’ business. Working under the direction of Dr. Diane Phillips of the St. Joseph’s University Department of Food Marketing the students spent time on farms, met with customers and studied competitive products. The results provided the information that will be incorporated into the copy describing each product to consumers. The analysis also revealed that each is marketing a product that can be produced in sufficient volume and at a standard needed for this project.

Summaries of the studies are included in this section.